

JENISON HISTORY

November 2015

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www.jenisonhistory.org

JENISON HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION
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MRS HUSBAND'S MAIDS BY RONNIE AUNGST, JHA MEMBER

During the 1800 and 1900s, women had few employment opportunities. One position was as a "domestic". These positions would range from a housekeeper who came in several days a week to a live-in servant. Mrs. Margaret Husband worked as a housekeeper for the Jenison twins when her husband was their bookkeeper.

Many women would find positions in the wealthy homes in Grand Rapids. In these positions, they would "live in" and return to their family's home on their day off by way of the Interurban. As a domestic, these women would do the cleaning, cooking, baking, serve meals, canning, churning butter, laundry and ironing, and in some cases even assist with the children. The larger and more wealthy homes had more than one servant and so the positions would be divided as cook, housekeeper, nanny, etc. In the smaller homes, the single servant would be in charge of it all. The maid received \$3 - \$3.50 per week in wages plus room and board. Mrs. Husband also had the maid bake a cake every Saturday because Mrs. Husband's daughter and son-in-law would come to visit for the weekend.

Our mission is to learn about Jenison history, obtain artifacts relating to its history, and maintain the Jenison Historical Museum as a place to share and display our heritage.

Christmas Open House December 5, 2015 and January 9, 2016 2-4 P.M.



Just a few of the details you will find during the Christmas season



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After Levi Husband died, Mrs. Margaret Husband became the bookkeeper for the Jenison twins. This was a full time position which meant she now needed help in her home. Census records helped identify the women who worked for Mrs. Husband. Census records, birth, marriage and death records give a fuller picture of these women's lives.

In 1890, **Josie [Josephine] Andre**, daughter of Hiram and Ida [Williams] Andre, was living at 118 Jefferson Ave., Grand Rapids and employed as a "domestic." By 1900, she was then employed by Mrs. Husband and lived in the home. She married January 3, 1901 in Grand Rapids to Peter J. Smith, leaving Mrs. Husband's before the Husband/Hanchett/Tiffany house was completed. Josie probably witnessed the planning for the Husband house. Josie went on to have a daughter, Mildred, in 1902 and then sadly, Josie died April 29, 1905. She is buried with her parents in the Grandville Cemetery.

Legend has it that the next maid was **Reka [Henricka] Mensink**, daughter of John and Mina [Spykeman] Mensink. Its assumed that she was hired following the departure of Josie Andre Smith and remained in

Mrs. Husband's employ until she married **Menno Zwart**, December 7, 1905 in Jenison. She would have helped Mrs. Husband to move into her new home and would have been the first maid in the Husband/Hanchett/Tiffany house. Reka's first child, Henry, was born about 1908. Its likely that Reka left Mrs. Husband's when she married in 1905. Her wedding dress is now in the possession of the Tiffany House Museum. According to census records, Reka and Menno had seven children. Reka died August 22, 1920 and is buried in the Georgetown Twp. Cemetery.

In the 1910 census, **Flora [Florence] Dornbush**, daughter of John and Ralphin [Vander Zyle] Dornbush, was the live-in domestic help. Her exact hiring date is unclear but she probably stayed until after Mrs. Husband died in 1913. Flora married John H. Tiemeyer November 21, 1914 in Jension. Flora and John had a son, Henry, born here in Michigan in about 1916 and then moved to Redlands, California, where they had 3 more children. Flora died May 9, 1940 in San Diego, California.

In 1920, Elsie Martin, Mrs. Husband's sister, was still residing in the Husband house. Elsie was

a widow, and like her sister, she was a bookkeeper. Elsie employed domestic help as well. **Winifred [nee Afman] Mingerink**, a widow with a nine month old daughter, Adriana, is listed as a "Servant [Employee]" on the 1920 census. Winifred married Adrian Mingerink in Grand Rapids, March 30, 1917. Adrian died from the flu December 10, 1918, leaving Winifred to support herself and their new baby and to place their 2 year old son, Ernest, with her parents, William and Martha Afman. Its not known how long Winifred, with her baby, stayed employed by Elsie Martin but Winifred remarried to Wm. Velting January 3, 1924. They would have seven more children. Winifred died April 12, 1970 in Kent County, Michigan.

While there were probably one or two other maids that we have not been able to identify, the above four women were the keepers of the Tiffany House Museum for the first 20 years under the direction of Mrs. Margaret Husband and Mrs. Elsie Martin.

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[Editors Note: Thank you to Ronnie Aungst for the research and writing of this story.]

December 2015

Annual Christmas Open House

The JHA members are busy decorating and sprucing up the museum so she can show all her glory for the Christmas season..

January 2016

Christmas Revisited

The holidays are so busy, sometimes you just cant fit another thing in. We will keep the decorations up into January so those that cant make it in January can still have the chance to see the Christmas decorations

Web Site:

Keep up to date by stopping by our website for a list of the our meeting and Open House dates and times by visiting (www.jenisonhistory.org)

MUSEUM HAPPENINGS

Considering Membership in JHA?

If you are not a dues paying member, please consider joining to help support the Association. Dues are a bargain at only \$10 per year, you will receive monthly updates to the happenings of the Association. Contact the JHA at info@jenisonhistory.org or call the museum at 616-457-4398. We look forward to seeing you,

Museum Notes

If you have been by the museum in the last few months, you probably have noticed the transformation of the gardens around the house. One of our newest members, Sandy Wensink, took a look at the grounds, and found where she could make a difference. Sandy has done a wonderful job transforming the beds back into a think of beauty!

Can you find this artifact?



In your visit to the museum, keep an eye out for this artifact.



Visit our gift shop area in the Kitchen for ornaments, stationary, etc.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Museum Cleaning: This is a big job, as you can well imagine, that needs constant attention in order to have the museum look it's best during the open houses. Contact any board member if you can lend a few hours.

Newsletter: Interested in helping publish? Research articles?

Tour Guides: The school tours are a great way of teaching the children about our history and is such a rewarding experience. You won't regret being a part of this experience for our local children.

Joyce Klawiter would love to hear from you.

And the list goes on...

Monthly Open Houses, Theme's for Open Houses, Inventory, Museum Maintenance, board trustee.

You can come to a monthly meeting or reach out to any board member if you would like to volunteer in any particular area.

*December/January Open House***Christmas 2015****December 5, 2015****1-4 PM****and****January 9, 2016****2-4 PM**

Join us as we celebrate the season. The Museum will be 'dressed' in all her glory. Take a break from shopping and step back in time as you wander the rooms and halls of this wonderful turn of the century home.

For Sale at the Museum

Jenison Museum Note Pads	\$ 1.50
Stationary with Envelopes	\$ 2.00
Book: Bend in the River	\$10.00
Book: At the Bend	\$ 4.00
Mill Print (unframed)	\$10.00
Jenison at the Bend CD	\$10.00
Historical Prints:	
Large	\$10.00
Small	\$ 7.50
Pencils (neon colors or wood)	\$.25

Souvenir Ornaments

2014 Edition	\$15.00
2012/13 Edition	\$15.00
One of each ornament for \$25.00	



Available during any open house, or call the Museum at 457-4398

JHA TRUSTEE'S**Chair/Membership**

Liz Timmer (16)
457-3708

Vice Chair/Curator/Tours

Ken Williams (17)
772.6523

Treasurer/Editor

Ruth Lowing (17)
896-1447

Social Secretary

Nellie DeLaat (16)
457-1193

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457-3016

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Barb Semeyn (17)
457-9343

Maintenance/Historian

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531-1218

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Yvonne Williams (14)
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534-6769

Township Rep

Ron Villerius

(##) = year of re-election to the board

Contact Information: contact the board at the above phone numbers or leave a message at 457-4398 or info@jenisonhistory.org

**Organization Membership in the
Historical Association of
Michigan**

Find us on the registry at
www.hsmichigan.org



Jenison Historical Association
PO Box 664
Jenison, MI 49429

2015 Meeting Schedule

Meetings are all open to the public and held on the **3rd Thursday** of the month at 6:45 PM at the Georgetown Library, unless noted. No meeting in December.

November 19, 2015

No Meeting in December

All meetings begin at 6:45 PM unless noted

2014 Museum Open House Schedule

Saturday, Open House schedule

December 5, 2015

January 9, 2016

March 19, 2016 2-4 PM - "History Mystery"

April 16, 2016 2-4 PM - "History Mystery"

Check out the web site for the entire 2016 schedule

ALSO: 1st Tuesday of the month April thru November -
10 AM - Noon